

A STORM has broken over Wycombe District Council's decision to open a lottery kiosk in the Octagon — six months after rejecting Wycombe Wanderers Football Club's plea for a similar kiosk.

But it took the casting vote of the environmental health committee chairman, Mrs Audrey Moore, to get the application through.

Wycombe Wanderers have been told they cannot have a similar lottery stand for at least three months, if at all.

Under emergency powers, Mrs Moore agreed in September that the stand should have a prime place in the Octagon.

It was considered an emergency by the lottery sub-committee, which said the site of the old kiosk, near the High Street, was dangerous. People queueing were too near traffic.

By only the chairman's casting vote did the committee confirm Mrs Moore's action. The trial kiosk will run for three months.

Bound

The committee decided to defer any decision on the plan by Wycombe Wanderers until its own kiosk had run the trial period.

A row started when Councillor Miss Joan Couper produced minutes of a March meeting when the council refused Wycombe Wanderers an Octagon kiosk. She said the committee could not allow any kiosk on this site.

"We are bound by this March decision, since it was about lotteries, giving us a matter of policy. This type of use of the Octagon was refused," she said.

"In taking this decision we are in effect completely reversing this committee's policy. It is completely wrong that we should give our lottery any prestige over any other."

Treatment

But Chief Executive Mr William Roberts told councillors the minute referred to refusing private lotteries, and the district's was public.

But Miss Couper said: "Once we start giving ourselves special treatment because we are running a lottery, for all our-spend-spend proposals it is as though we are asking our electors to believe in us next May."

Said Councillor Jim Harvey: "How can we afford ourselves the very facilities which we turned down? Is this some sort of them-and-us thing?" Added Councillor Peter Cartwright: "I always think this is first-come, first-served. If we are going to let the Octagon have a lottery, it should be first-come, first-served."

But Councillor Ken Ross spoke in favour of the kiosk. "We have heard a lot of talk about our lottery. We are not going to use the money for

our purposes. We are going to use the money for the ratepayers of the area," he said.

"I feel that we are raising money for the whole of the district, and if we start letting other lotteries in I think we ought to know how they are going to spend the money."

Ticking

Mr Reg Williams, chairman of Wycombe Wanderers, said: "The football club represents the town. We have a responsibility to the town. Everyone must know that with rising costs we need a lot of money to run a club."

"We need an awful lot of people coming along to the gates to keep us just ticking over. We have to find other ways of raising money, one of which is the lottery."

"We would like to build a new clubhouse, and we would like the staff of Wycombe General Hospital to use the facilities. Of course our lottery would be more successful if we had the same facilities as the council has given itself."